

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENOA 00533 142244Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 FMC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 DLOS-09
OES-07 L-03 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 AGRE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OPIC-06 /080 W
-----025311 151353Z /46

R 140800Z OCT 77
FM AMCONSUL GENOA
TO AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2043
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
AMCONSUL TURIN

UNCLAS GENOA 0533

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EWWT, EINV, ELAB, IT, US
SUBJ: SEALAND OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCES MOVE TO LIVORNO

REF: GENOA 0504

SUMMARY: AS ANTICIPATED IN REFTEL, A LIVELY DEBATE IS DEVELOPING BETWEEN SEALAND AND THE GENOA PORT AUTHORITY (CAP) FOLLOWING SEALAND S ANNOUNCEMENT ON OCTOBER 7 THAT IT INTENDS TO RELOCATE AND CONSOLIDATE ITS NORTHERN ITALIAN TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS AT LIVORNO, BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 1978. THE MEDIA HAVE BEEN AIRING THE POSITIONS OF BOTH SEALAND AND CAP, AND HAVE, THUS FAR, LARGELY REFRAINED FROM TAKING SIDES. SEALAND S MOVE HAS MANAGED TO SHARE ATTENTION WITH THE FLOOD CLEAN-UP OPERATIONS THAT HAVE DOMINATED LOCAL HEADLINES, AND HAS CAST GLOOM OVER THE PORT S ABILITY TO REBOUND FROM THE LOSS OF THIS IMPORTANT U.S. CLIENT. THUS FAR, THE DOCK WORKERS HAVE NOT TAKEN ANY ACTION AGAINST SEALAND S FACILITIES
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BUT THEIR INITIAL REACTION HAS BEEN VEILED CRITICISM OF CAP.
END SUMMARY.

1. RUPERT HICKLER, SEALAND S GENERAL MANAGER FOR ITALIAN AND MEDITERREAN OPERATIONS, ANNOUNCED SEALAND S DECISION TO LEAVE GENOA FOR LIVORNO AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON OCTOBER 7. HICKLER MAINTAINED THAT CAP S

UNWILLINGNESS TO LIVE UP TO ITS AGREEMENT TO MAKE SUFFICIENT HANDLING SPACE AVAILABLE FOR SEALAND S OPERATION WAS THE SOLE REASON FOR THE ANNOUNCED MOVE TO LIVORNO. SEALAND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKECALLS AT PALERMO AND NAPLES FOR CARGOS DESTINED TO SOUTHERN ITALY.

2. CAP S PRESIDENT DAGNINO PRESENTED THE PORT AUTHORITY S POSITION TO THE PRESS ON OCTOBER 11. DAGNINO REVEALED THAT SEVERAL CARRIERS, NAMELY THE ITALIAN STATE-CONTROLLED ITALIA LINES AND LLOYD TRIESTINO, PLUS THE ISRAELI ZIM LINES, HAD RAISED OBJECTIONS TO SEALAND S PRIVILEGED STATUS IN THE PORT AND WERE UNWILLING TO RELINQUISH THE AREA TEMPORARILY ASSIGNED THEM FROM SEALAND S FORMER PREFERENTIAL HOLDING. HE STATED THAT CAP HAD ATTEMPTED TO MEET SEALAND S DEMANDS THROUGH CONCESSION OF ADDITIONAL SPACE BOTH IN AND NEAR THE PORT. FINALLY, DAGNINO NOTED THAT SEALAND WAS OBTAINING ONLY A SMALL INCREASE IN SPACE IN LIVORNO OVER WHAT IT PRESENTLY HAS IN GENOA AND SPECULATED THAT THERE WERE OTHER REASONS BEHIND SEALAND S CONTEMPLATED MOOVE TO LIVORNO.RZ3. IN A SECOND APPEARANCE BEFORE THE PRESS ON OCTOBER 12, HICKLER REITERATED THAT THE SPACE FACTOR WAS THE SOLE REASON FOR SEALAND S MOVE TO LIVORNO. DAGNINO HAS REFUSED TO WITHDRAW HIS CHARGE AND THE POLEMICS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE.

4. WHILE THE SHIPPING COMMUNITY SEES SEALAND S DEPARTURE AS A REAL BLOW TO GENOA, DAGNINO IS ATTEMPTING TO PAINT A MORE OPTIMISTIC PICTURE. HE PREDICTS THAT THE OTHER CARRIERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT APPARENTLY FORCED HIS HAND TO RENEGE ON SEALAND S PRIVILEGED UNCLASSIFIED

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STATUS, WILL FILL THE VACUUM. MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES DOUBT THAT THIS WILL HAPPEN AND FORESEE SEALAND S DEPARTURE AS PART OF THE CONTINUING EXODUS AWAY FROM THE GENOA PORT.

5. GENOA S DOCK WORKERS, WHOSE EARNINGS WILL BE FURTHER CUT BY SEALAND S MOVE, HAVE GENERALLY REMAINED SILENT. BOTH CISL AND CGIL SPOKESMEN HAVE MILDLY CRITICIZED CAP FOR LOSING SUCH A VALUABLE CLIENT. DAGNINO S RESPONSE HAS BEEN TO APPEAL FOR MORE GOVERNMENT FINANCING TO DEVELOP THE NEW VOLTRI PORT. MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE HAS CALLED FOR A REFORM OF OUTMODED AND UNPRODUCTIVE LABOR PRACTICES TO KEEP GENOA S GENERAL TRAFFIC VOLUME FROM FURTHER DECLINE.

COMMENT:

PERHAPS SEALAND S MOVE MAY PRODUCE SOME POSITIVE RESULTS TOGETHER WITH THE ONGOING POLEMICS. GENOA S SHIPPING COMMUNITY CANNOT ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE SEALAND S CONTENTION THAT LACK OF SPACE WAS THE MAJOR FACTOR BEHIND THE MOVE TO LIVORNO. MOST BELIEVE THAT SEALAND OBTAINED ATTRACTIVE CONCESSIONS AND ADVANTAGES FROM LIVORNO CONTRASTED WITH THE HIGH COSTS OF MOVING CARGO THROUGH GENOA. MANY SUSPECT THAT SEALAND REFUSES TO ADVERTISE

ITS NEW ADVANTAGES BOTH TO DISCOURAGE ITS COMPETITORS FROM SEEKING
SIMILAR TREATMENT, AND OUT OF FEAR THAT ITS CRITICISM OF GENOA PORT
CONDITIONS AND COSTS MAY PROVOKE THE DOCK WORKERS TO TAKE RETALITORY
ACTION TO PREVENT SEALAND FROM LEAVING. IN THE LATTER CASE, WE MIGHT
HAVE ANOTHER TORRINGTON CASE ON OUR HANDS.DI SCIULLO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MARINE TRANSPORTATION, ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GENOA00533
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770379-0327
Format: TEL
From: GENOA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771061/aaaabzjf.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7ffb942f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 GENOA 504
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 922674
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SEALAND OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCES MOVE TO LIVORNO
TAGS: EWWT, EINV, ELAB, IT, US, SEALAND
To: ROME
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7ffb942f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009